

COLLAPSIBLE STEERING COLUMN ASSEMBLY

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The subject invention provides a collapsible steering column assembly. The
5 assembly includes a support for attachment to a vehicle. A steering column is
movably supported by the support. An energy absorbing mechanism interconnects
the steering column and the support for absorbing energy in response to the steering
column moving relative to the support during a collision. The energy absorbing
mechanism includes a elongated element and a brake for variably resisting the
10 movement of the elongated element and absorbing the energy during the collision.
The elongated element, in combination with the brake, is capable of adjustment to
absorb energy at forces of various magnitude such that a universal energy absorbing
device may be installed on each type of vehicle. Furthermore, the elongated element
retains structural integrity after absorbing the energy and need not be replaced.